



## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

### **Minutes of Wednesday March 21, 2018 Meeting**

**Location:** Northeast Hawley Development Association, 101 Gertrude Street, Syracuse 113203

#### **Present:**

Ellen Eagen, Founder & President  
Stephen Kimatian, Secretary/Treasurer  
John Stegeman, Trustee  
Victoria Giarratano, Trustee  
Bill Sanford, Trustee  
Eskedar Getahun, Trustee  
Fran Coudriet, Administration

#### **1. WELCOME**

Chairperson of the meeting, Trustee Stegeman, opened the meeting by saying that any members attending from the community who might have questions would have an opportunity after the business portion of the meeting to ask them. Trustee Eagen stated that the OnTECH Board viewed community questions and input very important to the work of the school in evaluating the best way of serving the community. The Chairperson then asked the Trustees to introduce themselves, after which he moved on to the general order of business.

#### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Stegeman stated that minutes from the February 21, 2018 meeting had been previously forwarded to all Trustees and he called for a motion to approve them. Trustee Sanford moved, seconded by Trustee Getahun for approval. There being no objection or modifications proposed, the motion was unanimously carried.

#### **3. FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Chairperson called upon Trustee Stephen Kimatian to give the Treasurer's report. Trustee Kimatian said there were two items on the agenda. The first was approval of the CSBM agreement. Key portions of the text of the proposed contract with CSBM were handed out to the Trustees. There was a discussion on the services to be provided. It was highlighted that many of the procedural aspects of working with the federal and state agencies were complex and it was important for OnTECH to insure full compliance. CSBM provided that kind of expertise. It was also pointed out that the audits that would be required needed to follow accounting guidelines and standards and also comply with any state and federal regulations. CSBM was knowledgeable in this area. It was further pointed out that CSBM would function much as a business operations individual and be performing functions normally associated with matters, and therefore, it would be unlikely that a person with that experience would need to be hired saving the cost of a position. After a thorough discussion on the merits, on motion by Trustee



Sanford, seconded by Trustee Giarratano, the motion was unanimously passed to agree to a one-year contract with CSBM, including the optional State Stimulus grant application services, but not the optional audit services.

The second item presented by Trustee Kimatian was the approval of the Erate proposals. This federally funded program allows for a reimbursement of the cost for certain telephone, IT and Internet services. The amount of reimbursement depends on the nature of the services. OnTECH is projected to need at least \$16,000 of services which could be recouped. The cost of processing the Erate applications through Garber Consultants is 3,000. This consultant agreement was previously approved. What was before the Board now were the specific companies and services that had been identified by the Erate consultant. The categories of expenses were shown to the board on a document circulated. A motion was made by Trustee Stegeman to approve these providers and the services under the Erate program, seconded by Trustee Giarratano and was unanimously carried.

#### **4. STUDENT ENROLLMENT / AGENDA AMENDMENT**

The Chairperson recognized Trustee Eagen who requested an amendment to the order of the agenda placing Student Enrollment for discussion at this time. There being no objections, a motion was made and carried to amend the agenda to discuss Student Enrollment.

Trustee Eagen called upon OnTECH advocates Glen Sanders and Morgan Berman to speak about their attendance at the Congolese International Women Empowerment Event the previous Saturday. Also in attendance at the event were Kaylie Siddall, Pastor Gail Riina and Trustee Stephen Kimatian. Glenn Sanders explained the event was intended to recognize the significant role of women in the life of the family and community. It was held at St. Stephen's Church on Dewitt Street in Syracuse. Attendance included over 60 individuals from the Congolese community. He said there were probably about 20 student age individuals as well as many young children and young adults present. Cyprien Mihigo introduced the representatives from OnTECH.

Morgan said many came up to talk with Glen and her. Some were apparently overage but were eager to be educated. Trustee Eagen said she followed up with some of these individuals on the day of this board meeting. Even though there were some overage individuals, she said that OnTECH would want to reach out and help as many as possible. One individual said they came to America in hopes of achieving their dreams but found some of the community not as welcoming as they expected. They also said that the school district needed to serve so many children that it seemed not to have the necessary time or resources to devote to the New Americans. Trustee Eagen said she would be speaking with the State Education Department with respect to the parameters of allowable ages. She also addressed the ARISE event to be held on April 7<sup>th</sup> saying OnTECH is willing to pay for tickets for any Trustees or Advocates to attend.

#### **5. CURRICULUM**

Trustee Eagen stated that progress continues to be made with the curriculum and she would give a more detailed report at a later meeting. She suggested that the board time remaining be focused on the important job of selecting the Head of School.



## **6. PERSONNEL / STAFFING**

The Chair acknowledged the importance of the Head of School discussion and called upon Trustee Eagen to present the status to the Board. Trustee Stegeman recapped the procedure that had been taken. Through advertising, word of mouth and references from third parties, approximately 30 candidates had been identified. After an initial review of the candidates by Trustees Eskedar, Giarratano, Stegeman and Eagen, twelve were identified as meriting further scrutiny. The same trustees undertook a closer review of the candidates and after evaluating the candidates for experience, potential and ability to lead OnTECH, two were determined to be the best candidates to be reviewed by the full board in person.

As such, Trustee Eagen reported, two days have been set aside, Monday April 9<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 PM – 8:00 PM each day, to have an in person interview of the candidates with board members, potential teachers, as well as members of the community. During the stated time set aside for the interviews, the schedule allows for separate evaluations by the various constituencies. The last period of the interview process was the candidate meeting with the whole board. Trustee Eagen said to ensure the maximum use of time a light dinner would be brought in for everyone attending. The location of the interviews will be announced. Reservations have been made for use of a conference room and meeting area. Additional background information materials are available.

## **7. FACILITIES**

The Chairperson called upon Trustee Kimatian to give the facilities report. Trustee Kimatian said the acquisition of the property by Building Hope was proceeding as expeditiously as possible. Attorneys hired by Building Hope moved to secure a variance. The engineering work was being done by Clough Harbour. Steps were taken to get on the calendar as soon as possible. The target is to conclude this phase within a month. Trustee Kimatian then referred to the Pre-Development Agreement with Building that was discussed at the last meeting. A vote was needed to approve the agreement. Essentially the agreement requires Building Hope to go forward with the acquisition of the property with the understanding that the costs associated with going forward would ultimately be borne by OnTECH if for some reason there was an impediment to going forward. The clause was inserted by OnTECH that if there was a reason not to go forward, the costs would not be borne by OnTECH if the reason for not going forward was the fault of Building Hope. After discussion, the motion by Trustee Sanford accepted the agreement as presented, seconded by Trustee Giarratano, was unanimously carried.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no new business or further agenda items, on motion by Trustee Sanford, seconded by Trustee Stegeman, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote.